THE COMMONWEAL

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THE DEVIL OF DULLNESS

THE case of the American novel is a strange one. No kettle that ever boiled has had so many watchers. Upon no broth have more cooks been engaged at one time, nor so busily and consciously. The vastness of the banquet—the uniqueness of the opportunity by themselves suggest an adequate incentive to excel in the confection. But those whose concern is its serving-up in final and conclusive fashion do not appear to judge them sufficient. Monetary awards, upon a scale that makes all similar prizes in the past ridiculous by their exiguity, are held before the ambitious weaver of words who shall discover the missing recipe. Criticism has largely abdicated its function of finding fault. Much of the appraisal coming even from reviewers whose severity in the past earned them their repute is hardly to be distinguished from the encouragement that the far-sighted professor in English accords the budding talent of his class. A general impression that the mountain is in parturition, and that we stand upon the verge of some delivery that shall put the emancipation of the 100 percent American novel from all other influences past question is very much in the literary air.

This being so, it is depressing to have to note that native critics persist who do not share the current enthusiasm, whose faith in prodigies to come is lukewarm, and whose estimate of what has already been accomplished is so lacking in fervor that it has very much the effect of a douche of cold water cast on the simmering surface of the kettle aforementioned. A very able article in a recent issue of the New Republic, whose anonymity, however much a Punchinello's secret it may be, it is only good manners to respect, reviews the "All-Star Literary Vaudeville" en masse and in detail. It is not necessary to follow its author step by step as he records his dissatisfaction with a succession of be-paragraphed names, or his disagreement with the verdict that has made them headliners. It is enough to note that he seldom departs from the disrespect that his title implies. Dreiser "writes so badly that it is impossible to read him": Hergesheimer hardly better, though "in a fancy way": Cabell is "intolerably insipid" and the maps and genealogies of Poictesme a weariness to the flesh: Willa Cather is "usually dull": Waldo Frank "combines Joyce with the Hebrew prophets": Lewis has exhausted his message. Even of Sherwood Anderson, whom this merciless critic somehow respects, it has to be recorded that very much of his material "has evaporated in his hands from his not knowing how to deal with it." Nor

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do the critics, those shepherds whose function it is to watch the writing flock and point out the scaly sheep escape criticism for their dereliction of duty. "Almost all forget critical standards in their devotion to the great common cause—the cause of an American national literature in independence of English literature, and of the contemporary mind as against the mind of the last generation."

Altogether, it is a dismal situation that the New Republic writer depicts for us—a literature that is showing the stigmata of fatigue before the first stage of its journey has been well accomplished, a heritage that has fallen into clumsy hands or is being misspent through a mere desire to be "different," a nationalism that, through the overhaste of its well-wishers to bestow praise, is in danger of becoming a complacent sectionalism.

The picture is black, and its very density is certain to provoke lively retort from writers who never show themselves backward in coming to the defense of the contemporary novel when it is comprehensively attacked. The sense of a common indictment will efface many rivalries. It will be pointed out, and with considerable justice, that the anonymous critic's very contentment that the American novel shall be judged by an inconsiderable number of "great names" is proof of his own impressibility by arts of whose sincerity he is at no pains to conceal his suspicion. His own sincerity would have gained, and the moral been far better pointed had even five or six authors been propounded upon whose names the blight of popular neglect rests but whose work evinces a determination to be "perfect rather than popular." As it is we are left somewhat in the air, advised that the American novel is failing of its possibilities, but undirected as to the source from which regeneration is to come.

One consideration, however, falls into place, all the more reasonably because the writer, in a moment of more than usually devastating candor, suggests it himself. "I must confess," he declares roundly, "that I cannot read our novelists." Now if the contemporary American novel—of the sort, anyhow, that has pretensions to be considered literature, cannot be read without a mental attitude that amounts to an effort of the will, the assumption is fair that it either lacks some ingredient, or has acquired some vice, that renders enjoyment of it an acquired taste. The fact that thousands of busy brains are in turmoil, and thousands of nimble pens running, to inculcate and diffuse this taste, will not alter the fact that a book whose perusal is only completed through a sense of duty or national amour-propre, is a book born dead.

The fact is, that the story-tellers of the past, for all their shortcomings, enjoyed one inestimable resource for making their creations live that the present generation of imaginative writers either discard or, when they would avail themselves of it, find it so far beyond their reach that it cannot be incorporated into any human document with the pretense of contemporaneity. We need not be so blunt as the theologian, and term it a sense of sin. The idea will be more generally understood if we identify it merely as a consciousness that, for certain contingencies, certain codes of conduct are imperative and categorical, not to be infringed without that violent rupture of continuity which is of the essence of drama. How far these codes are founded on morality, and how far on mere behaviorism, is not the question now. What needs to be stressed is that their elimination from human motive in favor of instinct and the sensory apparatus, however powerfully and colorfully this be conveyed, not only degrades the novel, but induces an inevitable monotony. "Naturalism," declares M. Louis Baumann, in words which The Commonweal quoted last week, "tends to reduce a man to a mere play of instincts."

The tedium that has overtaken the novel through the scrapping of traditional motives of interest is perceived in other countries than our own. A recent writer in The Month, of London, deplores the fact that the new psychology has only succeeded in giving us "an uninviting picture of the strange jungle that is the unconscious life of man." And M. Henri Massis, editor of La Revue Universelle, puts the matter still more cogently when he complains that, in the work of the newer writers "the world is blotted out, and human creatures blent with shadows. Reality loses form and substance. Men and women walk alone, companioned solely by the fantasies of their own spiritual nightmare, believing in nothing save themselves."

Let us imagine for a moment, a "Scarlet Letter" in which the sin of Hester Prynne and Dimsdale should be treated as the eminently natural resultant of youth, mismated, meeting youth; a "Jane Eyre" in which Jane's flight from her lover's arms to the moors should be presented as no more than the residuum of religious terrors in a sub-consciousness starved and frightened in youth; a "Vanity Fair" where society was unarmed against the intrigues and cajoleries of a little "arriviste"—a "Madame Bovary," if you will, where a moral "laissez-aller" was the order of the day among the smug bourgeoisie of Yonville. That the great novels of Hawthorne, Charlotte Bronte, Thackeray, and Flaubert, would not still be read, and widely, is a very questionable assumption. But that their heroines would stand out as perennial types of womanhood, to be known and re-known, commented and analyzed afresh as long as the love of literature shall last, is not so debatable. Of how many among the authors that the New Republic writer inscribes on his roll of speculative honor, will one character (if we possibly except the deathless Babbitt) be a password and symbol upon men's lips a hundred —or even fifty years from today?

Popular proverbs enshrine a secular wisdom that is seldom found at fault. There is nothing inconsequent nor slipshod in the phrase, "as dull as the devil."

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WEEK BY WEEK

IT IS more imperative than ever that the American conscience, still sluggish and poorly informed, should speak out against the disorderly conduct of the neighboring Mexican government. We have all hesitated to request official action by the United States in a matter so likely to be termed special pleading; and to this hesitation there have been sacrificed the interests of fellow-citizens resident in Mexico, the liberty of Catholic and Protestant ministers of religion, and the continued tranquillity of Pan-American relations. Few thoughtful persons, reading through the history which has followed 1840, will wish that anything but friendly living side by side is to be the definition of our national purpose as concerns Mexico. But it is evident that the enforcement of an intolerant constitution, against which we as a people protested and must continue to protest, will inevitably lead to the end of the road. Calles versus religion is no longer an issue in which only Catholics are interested. Calles versus religion means a Mexico in continued turmoil, characterized by the use of persecuting force, by the maintenance of an authority which citizens cannot legitimately recognize, and by the assumption of an attitude toward foreigners which jeopardizes rights freely and lawfully contracted for. We are not interested in trying to shove Mr. Kellogg into action; but it becomes apparent that Mr. Kellogg or his successor will have to act, and this is an eventuality for which all Americans must be prepared.

THE Catholic aspects of the situation have naturally been emphasized by those who speak for the universal Church, and by others whom the nefarious excesses of the Calles régime have spurred to vehement protest. The papal letter ordering a day of prayer for the speedy cessation of persecution will be followed obediently by millions of the faithful; but even those who bear in mind that their petitions are laid at the feet of the Prince of Peace will know that it is not asked of them supinely to bear scurrilous indignities. In a non-political way, Mexican Catholics are to be banded together, under the leadership of the Archbishop of Mexico City, in the League of Religious Defense. The story of such an organization cannot prove a comfortable or uneventful one: its leaders will be hounded down and the worst excesses of autocracy will be wreaked against it. Citizens of the United States, however, see in it an obvious reason for making a choice—a choice between proponents of religious liberty, devoted to the ideal of stable government and international amity, and the subterranean hangmen of revolutionary dictatorship who are true to the antinomian instincts which gave them birth.

IT is wholly within the province of Señor Elias, the official Mexican propagandist resident in the United States, to publish any material he sees fit to issue. But without being peculiar, to say the least, American minds cannot accept his statements at their par value. The facts are plentiful and unmistakable; and in the face of them one wonders how the editors of the New York World, usually so alert to defend legitimate liberty, can calmly comment on the Mexican situation by saying: "As in France some twenty years ago, there promises to be in Mexico, for a period at least, the same bitter controversy over the state's exercise of power and some show of resistance to the enforcement of the law." All this is indeed likely. One might even term it inevitable. But the really important thing about it is that it happens to be virulently wrong —wrong in a manner which anyone who respects the noble decency of law must resent as a violation of the oldest thing for which men have fought. The New York World is still sitting on the fence, where Americans have all hoped they might abide peacefully. Señor Calles's political mission, however, is to push them off; and he "promises" to succeed.

WHAT mark for deportment should be given to the Congress just adjourned will be a subject of controversy until next fall. The New York Herald Tribune, as the official administration newspaper, has the right to say that "the results of the session have gone a long way to reëstablish the credit previously lost with the country by narrow-mindedness and ultra-partisanship." Doubtless the purely partisan squabbles were not so evident as they might have been—as, indeed, the party platforms of the last presidential election year were documents far more alike than dissimilar. But when one attempts to list the congres-

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sional achievements for the year, apart from minor legislation, the political situation becomes quite as clear as a haze. The passage of the Mellon financial program with some changes is evident proof of the influence of the Secretary of the Treasury with the administration: he was successful, not only in reapportioning the income-tax in the manner he considered suitable, but also in settling the major foreign debts; and it is not unlikely that the eminently cautious formula devised for participation in the World Court was also partly his discovery. These were matters which Republicanism was prepared to handle. Other problems found it baffled or purposively inert; and the fact that neither the farm demands nor the prohibition queries were satisfactorily taken into account opens the way for future epic contests in the arena. Thus no finality can be attached to the work of more or less industrious popular representatives. Marred though it was by filibusters and random debates, by wholesale displays of ignorance and sectional prejudice, the Congress proved that the tempo of our parliamentary life is still relatively normal.

THIS year's convention of the Central Verein, assembled in Springfield, Illinois, was honored both by the presence of the most important delegates to the Eucharistic Congress and by the adoption of an exceptionally timely resolution. Monsignor Seipel, renowned no less for his integrity as a man than for his acumen in rescuing Austria from financial catastrophe, urged the Verein to realize a heartfelt wish of Pope Benedict XV and begin a world-wide movement for universal peace. He said very frankly that aloofness from movements to establish amity between nations has been a grave mistake on the part of those whose active religion is governed by the rule of charity. In adding as he did that the impetus to Catholic international action ought to come from the United States, Monsignor Seipel spoke as a man who realizes from practical experience how deeply rooted in circumstance is continental discord. His words were reinforced by a short and earnest tribute to the American spirit from Cardinal Faulhaber, whose appearance on the platform must have recalled the noble grandeur of his address at the last Munich "Catholic day," where he urged with words to which all of Germany listened the necessity for using the authority of Christ to render impossible the idea of a future European war catastrophe.

WE cannot refrain from adding here an inadequate tribute to the work of the Central Verein. During more than eighteen years, this organization of German-American Catholics has been notable for the sincerity with which it has approached the study and solution of moral and social problems. Its conventions and periodicals have disseminated the tenets of a sound civic doctrine which, for all their indebtedness to the great forward-looking prelates and scholars of the old world, are immediately applicable to conditions in this country. But—and the point is worthy of the most careful attention—the Verein has not been content with theoretical achievement only. Its bureau in St. Louis, as well as its subsidiary units, has carried out excellent practical work in a number of fields. The aiding of immigrants, particularly Mexicans in the southwest; the organization of conferences on problems incident to rural life; the care of mothers and orphans; the giving of charity to the starving in Central Europe—all these things have occupied the intelligent attention of the Verein and its leaders. During the next ten years we shall understand more fully the value of such an organization, but we can never owe it a greater debt than we do at the present moment.

ALTHOUGH the French nation's fiscal problems seem to outweigh in importance the grave responsibilities of its colonial empire, these continue to absorb the attention of political observers. In so far as the Syrian situation is concerned, it is a pleasure to see that Mr. Paul Knabenshue's report to the State Department, delivered in his capacity as American consul, is optimistic concerning the progress made by M. de Jouvenel. Military operations having been curtailed to the minimum required to cope with the rebellion, M. de Jouvenel appointed a notable Moslem resident as President of the State of Syria, "authorizing him to form a cabinet and take over the responsibility of the provisional government and, if possible, make peace with the rebels." At the present moment all difficulties have not been removed, but the French commissioner was able to accept the conditions laid down by the provisional government and to proceed with the formation of the Lebanese republic, as stipulated by the mandate. The hope for a definitive settlement seems to be based upon solid facts and assumptions. It may be too early to predict M. de Jouvenel's complete success, but the recent election of a new president by the Lebanese assembly proved to anyone's satisfaction how much he has done to redeem the honor of France, that had been squandered so ruthlessly by the brutal boor who preceded him.

THE passing of Emile Coué naturally draws attention not so much to what the man was as to what modernity variously took him for. When he came to America, Coué was a modest and beneficent little Frenchman who had found a practical formula for optimistic auto-suggestion. So far as anybody has been able to find out, he studiously avoided calling himself a scientist, a miracle-man, or the harbinger of a new dispensation. He really thought he amounted to something as a popular phrase-maker who could corral into a few simple words a generally usable amount of a psychic force which neither he nor his

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scientific superiors knew much about. France took him tranquilly at his own modest evaluation and made little fuss about the matter. But when Coué arrived in this country he was news—news that could be correlated, by writing fellows more dapper but less concise than he, with the movies, the mystical panaceas, and even the modernist-fundamentalist controversies which had then been arresting the American public. And the result? Crowds of more than relatively hysterical people hurrying to get under the spell of his magic eye, to accept the much-heralded formula as a fetish, to kiss, when opportunity was kind, the reachable portions of his pantaloons. It all argued that at least a sizable American mob could be knocked completely loose from everything like sanity. And thereby Coué demonstrated the power of literature—not so much through the magic of his own roseate sentence, but through the distorted thing he became when the day's journalism had had its way.

IT is difficult to be unreservedly enthusiastic about Mr. Sumner, of the Society for the Suppression of Vice. His intellect is not of a giant order, and though his intentions are good, the combination of heart and brain in all he has undertaken to do hitherto, has been of a unilateral order that makes agreement or disagreement with him alike an ungrateful task. So far as common sense is concerned, however, his recent refusal to become chairman of a play jury appointed by that zealot for dramatic decorum, Mr. Flo Ziegfeld, leaves him considerably higher in our esteem. The official reason given for his refusal is that his attachment to the Ziegfeld enterprises in the rôle of domestic censor would bring "undesirable publicity" upon his head, but from other reported statements it is possible to credit him with sounder motives. The fashion of commercial enterprises conducted along lines whose connection with ethics is not clear, of attaching individuals to themselves by a retaining fee, whose probity or good citizenship has been aired in the columns of the press, might well stop on the hither side of morals. Sydney Smith, the witty dean of Westminster, once translated the motto, "Domine Dirige Nos" inscribed under the city arms on the Royal Exchange as: "O Lord, keep us straight!" The task of guiding and directing the entertainment purveyors whose slogan has not greatly changed since Louis Veuillot summed it up as "Never too much gold: and never too many girls," is on the scale popularly described as "man-size." But as good a means of ensuring that it shall mean something more than whitewash is to see to it that, if we are to have him, someone besides the wolves chooses the sheep-dog.

THE famous Foreign Legion of France has bulked largely of late both in romantic fiction and in memoirs hardly distinguishable from fiction. But it is probable that nothing which has been said of it exceeds the tragic reality of the truth. There is something that acts as a challenge to imagination in this melting pot of valor and devotion, before whose drastic discipline prince and beggar are equal, and in whose tragic anonymity so many a ruined and branded life takes refuge to pay for its bread with its blood and to earn a soldier's grave as its final reward. It is interesting therefore, to find M. Paul Morand, that idol of the younger intellectuals in France (and in America) arousing much comment by referring in an article printed in the Nouvelle Revue Française, to the Trappist order as "the Foreign Legion of God."

MAKING all allowances for poetic license, there are many parallels that justify the simile. Like the famous Legion the order attracts to its ranks two categories of men—those whom the world has misused and those who from the beginning have no use for the world. Like the Legion, it covers rank and station with the mask of a name, none the less matriculated because it is saintly. And like the Legion—it asks no questions! Commenting on M. Morand's happy expression the Vie Catholique has this to say: "His phrase comes to us at a moment when many people are feeling the need of some 'foreign legion' to fulfil the profounder aspirations of the soul. It is its timeliness, quite as much as its picturesqueness, which accounts for the success of M. Morand's saying. For, with God, who is a foreigner? Those who think themselves furthest from Him are often on the very verge of their return."

WITH the visiting German bishop of Speyer acting as celebrant, the field Mass which opened the work of the summer at the Pius X School of Liturgical Music assumed an appropriately international character. No human circumstance so distinguishes the ceremonials of the Church as does universality—sameness in all climes and among all peoples, the umbrage of the single saving sacrifice on Calvary. An ample host of the clergy was gathered round the altar, including priests of many different nationalities; the music was directed by a Canadian authority, the Reverend J. E. Ronan; and the singing children were gathered from various schools in and near the city of New York. To say that the glory of the angelic chant was apparent to all who listened, is merely to repeat an old truth about the work done at the Pius X School. Its summer session gives every indication of being a pleasant and fruitful one, interesting as it does an exceptionally large number of those who are entrusted with the teaching and direction of ecclesiastical music. An elderly organist once described a choir as "a gathering of those who serve the Lord by doing violence unto themselves." Work like that which Mother Stevens and those associated with her are doing through the medium of the Pius X School of Liturgical Music removes both the violence and the self.

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NORTH AND SOUTH OF PARIS

THE continuous standstill of parliamentary government in France is a challenging phenomenon. Granted that the financial problem is serious enough to baffle even the best minds, it still remains singular that a nation which some years ago was obviously victorious can find no way out of the disastrous impasse. The explanation is simple. France cannot solve the problem because France herself is dissolved. Between a Left which was brought to a halt during the great strikes of 1920 and a Right which has hardly any other fundament than the Banque de France there is little ground for compromise. It is this ground which the Briand ministries and those which have preceded it were required to establish themselves upon. The battle is not merely for a certain solution of the money question. The battle is rather for a solution of everything which has to do with property and government.

Curiously enough, this impasse has relegated to a secondary position another conflict that has endured as long as the Third Republic. Today the religious issue does not rise to the surface; the picture drawn, in this number of The Commonweal, by the Abbé Klein, remains firm in its general outline; and even the school issue in Alsace-Lorraine is apparently at rest. But can this truce be termed a real victory for religion in France? The question is of the greatest importance because in all Gaul there are really no three parts. A citizen is either in the Church or outside the pale of Christendom. And it is answered hopefully by some who point to the numerous conversions among intellectuals, pessimistically by others who deal in statistics. We believe that it is answered exceptionally well in a paper recently contributed to the Revue Apologétique by J. Valdour.

M. Valdour's inquiries are concerned chiefly with the working classes. He finds that indifferentism has succeeded hostility, that a system of laic education has uprooted all knowledge of religious matters from a very great many hearts, and that "the divorce between the Church and the multitude is complete and already ancient." During three years of investigations he found out the following facts, among numerous others: in certain districts of Paris three-fourths of the working population do not even bring their children to the baptismal font; in certain parts of Touraine, 600 out of a total potential parish membership of 10,000 attend religious services; in the city of Mans a parish of 3,000 souls has lost all excepting 300; in the Sarthe a village of 1,200 inhabitants has completely ceased going to church, and its dead are buried under slabs bearing the inscription of "Liberté, égalité, fraternité." And so the story continues. The enemies of religious belief have succeeded during the last fifty years in educating Christianity out of thousands of hearts which are now called upon to render heroic personal sacrifices, to labor for the common good, to rear up children for a nation bled white, and to repel the lure of social revolution! Small wonder that many who doubt the supernatural character of religion should be appalled at the wholesale disappearance of its natural effects.

M. Valdour enumerates the remedies which can be applied. But he sees clearly that none of these can prove effective, in the long run, against a hostile government. If at present political peace exists, "anti-clericalism is asleep in the hearts of the people." Therefore it is absolutely essential that instruction now dispel ignorance; that the old policy of obediently accepting everything dictated by Parisian liberalism cease; and that there must be "battle and victory." Hope lies in the continuing discovery by French intellectuals—M. Jacques Cocteau is the most recent example—of the identity of the Church and civilization. A thinking minority, conscious of the stakes for which the intellectual world is playing, is capable of standing against numbers for the redemption of the stricken nation. But it must be truly enlightened and aware of the difficulties to be faced.

Small wonder that the program of l'Action Française has interested many. Here there is not only energetic respect for the Church, generally even acceptance of the dogmas of the Church, but also something like a tenaciously held social doctrine. A group which approaches the study of labor problems in the spirit of Le Play is going ahead on ground as firm as any discoverable to reason. But the trouble with l'Action Française is super-abundant theory. Committed as it is to a scheme of political action not conceivably within reach, it is really only a party of the past or the future. That the governmental system of France needs reform is obvious; but the American spectator hopes that it will be something speedier and more easily realized than the dreams of Charles Maurras. This spectator sees also that this waiting, this "positivist idealism," will never get down to the business of salvaging the great crowd who have been lured out of the House of God by the palaver of a sceptical half-century.

It is a sorely tried, vitiated, often malformed crowd. "When the young man leaves the laic school," says M. Valdour, "he is trained in the factory, the street, by the newspaper, by all those things which constitute a social environment. The adults with whom he associates, the cinema, the theatre, the advertisement, the picture papers, the public gatherings, the revolutionary syndicates—all these create the atmosphere in which he moves and which is guaranteed stable by the state." Small wonder there is a problem, that there are dozens of problems in France. An American cannot know how to solve them. He can merely observe, sympathize, aid a little with his alms and his petitions, knowing that the outcome of it all will have an important bearing upon the civilization of the world and upon the inner spiritual life of Christendom.

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THE GREAT SIMPLICITY OF JEFFERSON

By EDYTHE H. BROWNE

"THE greatest truths are the simplest—and so are the greatest men."

If statues could become animate how Thomas Jefferson would have turned his stony head in dismay, how quickly would the honored hand that penned America's first liberty bond have been raised in protestation, how tightly would the jaws have locked in fixed reserve, when his admiring countrymen celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of his death on July 4, 1926. For Jefferson was a plain man. He could purchase Louisiana with one hand and a bag of pansy seed for his garden at Monticello with the other. In private life he was the bland Southern gentleman in soft shoes, making his own fire at dawn, chatting with his adoring slaves, humming a snatch of darky lullaby as he climbed the stairs to bed. In public life as governor, minister to France, secretary, vice-president, and finally president, Jefferson was the modest diplomat to whom titles of "His Excellency" and "Honorable" were unwelcome, and whose official chamber was accessible to casual callers.

Jefferson would have frowned on the noisy tribute of July 4, because in life he sought no tribute but his own conscience. The one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson's pet brain child, gave but a sharper retort to the firecrackers. So this double celebration would have nettled Mr. Jefferson. In deference, therefore, to his wish were he alive today, we shall not toast him for historic achievement; we shall rather present him as the plain man, the man of simplicities, profiled against private life and public life.

Peter Jefferson and Jane Randolph were the influencing parentheses in the boyhood of their son Thomas. From his father, a Goliath of the Virginia backwoods, he inherited a stubbornly strong body which he was taught to care for by simple meals of boiled beef and lamb, simple recreations of gardening and horseback riding, and simple clothing of homespun. Although Thomas was her first son, Mrs. Jefferson primed him early in the elementary art of waiting on himself. When he was a student at William and Mary College, Williamsburg, his natural simplicity once bolted, and attired in brocaded coat and lacy garters he attended brilliant soirées on week-end visits to relatives. When he reported his expenses to his guardian he punished himself for the extravagant departure by charging the sum against his own share of inheritance.

The mature Jefferson in the privacy of his beloved Monticello, spent his day in simple routine. We can see Ursula, one of his favorite slaves, waddling about "Massa Jefferson" as he eats his scant breakfast of coffee, bread, and wafer of cold meat. He spent most of the morning in his study, a silent figure in black coat in his famous "whirligig" or swivel chair, of which he was the inventor. Here he read; entered such commonplaces in his diary as "the first shad has appeared on the market, . . . we are out of myrtle candles," on the same page with important affairs of state; wrote letters to English lords, French counts, and German barons, all with non-essential postscripts as to the effects of a cold in the head, the particular kind of rainbow that arches over Monticello. The ordinary bearings of daily life were romance to Jefferson's Saxon soul. Perhaps it was during an interval of musing between letter-writing that he sketched the plain stone obelisk that was to mark his grave, and perhaps, too, he confided his wish for unostentatious burial to an odd scrap of paper on which he wrote: "Choose for a burial place some unfrequented vale in the park, where there is no sound to break the stillness but a brook."

Later in the morning we see Jefferson meeting his world of plebian folk. Usually a silent man, he would perch on an anchor at the end of a wharf and joke with shipwrights. In his whitening seventies he would sit day after day on a camp-stool in the midst of masonry, suggesting plans to the workmen who were rearing his dream of higher education in enduring stone—the University of Virginia. Thirty slaves ministered to the Jefferson household, yet they were not of Jefferson's own purchase but "black chattels" inherited from his father. The master was a benign king among them, patting the head of a pickaninny, teaching the men carpentry, bandaging a hurt finger.

After lunch he mounted his horse, Wildair, not with a flourish of slave-curtsying and a donning of glossy boots and princely spurs, but quietly, with worn overalls for toggery and a passing negro lad for servant. Wildair looked the statelier of the two. After leisurely cavaliering along the banks of the Rivanna River Jefferson would drop the reins for the hoe. Sunset found him working in his garden.

Dinner at Monticello was a festive affair with Jefferson as shy but genial host to the distinguished guests who drank to his health. At table he addressed conversation to his next-door neighbor. Southern hospitality was not wanting in him—his kitchen gave forth tempting odors of roast beef and mutton, his cellar brimmed with cider and rare wines, and sometimes fifty beds were in magic readiness for those who wished to stay overnight—but he was rather personally sparing. Self was a beggar whom he never befriended.

In the evening in family reunion about the hearth, Jefferson's candle and Bible were twin comforts. He had a simple concept of religion—belief in God and

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reverence for Jesus Christ. He retired habitually at nine o'clock.

Jefferson's public life, a thick slice of forty years off his eighty-three, was bleached of personal glorification. He campaigned for democracy and his first act toward that end was to uproot the enthroning weeds of rank that grew about himself as a public figure. Colonial Virginia was servile. Slaves cringed before their masters. The lady in crinoline dropped a curtsy and a handkerchief when a dashing Continental passed her gate and would be blushingly honored by his attention. Assembly members in lace cuffs greeted one another with cotillion bows. The newspapers were extravagantly salutatory. Mrs. Washington's arrival in New York was heralded by the following grandiloquence from the Gazette: "Arrived in this city Mrs. Washington, the amiable consort of the President of the United States. At Elizabeth Point she was met by the President . . . and several other gentlemen of distinction. She was conducted over the bay . . . rowed by thirteen eminent pilots." Jefferson called this gushing punctilio a "frenzy."

The famous "Jefferson" of the British artist, Gilbert Stuart, tallies with our pen portrait. The Chief Executive sits in a suit of black "plain cloth" on the edge of the chair rather than assume a stately posture against the back. His stock is a bit awry, his hands clasp no keys of power, even the right hand resting on a writing tablet is devoid of the simple quill. The painting might be called "A Man in Black," so scrupulously has the artist respected Jefferson's wish that nothing should distinguish him as President.

On inauguration day Jefferson defied convention. The buff-colored chariot with its tinselled horses and attendants in cloth of scarlet, was to conduct the Honorable and Distinguished Mr. Jefferson to the Capitol at Washington. The road along which the procession was to pass was aflutter with waving handkerchiefs. But instead of cheering, the crowd suddenly fell back. In the distance came Jefferson, seated nonchalantly on Wildair, unaccompanied by servants, his tri-cornered hat a little askew, his riding-coat mud-spattered. He dismounted at the gate of the Capitol and hitching the bridle to a picket fence thus unceremoniously presented himself at the White House.

For eight years Jefferson sat in a hush in the presidential chair. The infant republic was an anaemic baby, born after the blood of Revolutionary patriots was spilled. It needed vigilant nursing and this Jefferson gave it, rocking its cradle quietly, and at the same time shielding it from alien dangers. He was accused of timidity and vacillation probably because his decisions were never explosive but budded gradually from quiet interviews or from the seclusion of personal correspondence. The word-duelling between Hamilton and Jefferson was a clash of personalities—the audacious egoist against the discreet altruist.

Jefferson opened Congress, not in the customary English manner with a lengthy speech, but by jotting down a few noble sentiments couched in household language, and sending his message by private hand. He was also an economist of time. He could not see the morning hours wither in the hands of the fashionable clientele that met at the weekly levees to honor the President. So he abolished these breakfast matinees. Many a damsel was cheated of the opportunity to parade her newest "Dolly Varden" on the Monticello lawn. Because Jefferson believed that "the rulers of America are but honored servants," he clipped more weeds of caste from around his feet by refusing to have his birthday celebrated. A committee member asked him:

"What is the date of your birth, Mr. Jefferson?"

"Of what concern is that to you?" he replied.

"We wish to give it fitting celebration."

"For that reason," answered Jefferson, "I decline to enlighten you. . . . I shall also be obliged if you will omit the 'Mr.' "

When in January, 1785, Jefferson was elected to succeed Franklin as Minister Plenipotentiary to France a friend congratulated him on replacing Franklin. Jefferson modestly replied: "I go to succeed him, for no one could replace him." Gilded France held no witchery over Jefferson. He admired her art but he felt "at home" on stolen visits to French peasants. As welcome guest to a lilac-covered cottage he would sit down to a meal of crackers and cheese while the host and the pig-tailed children clacked in ecstatic French about him.

Jefferson's official papers are characterized by the same simplicity that molds the man. His masterpiece, the Declaration of Independence, is unvarnished argument proceeding from a terse statement of self-evident truths, up neat steps of fact, to a platform of blunt conclusion. Unity of thought through a lattice of varying sentence structure labels this famous document a model of argumentative writing.

Simplicity is the vital ingredient in nature's mixing of the magic potion—a great man. Thomas Jefferson was one of her choice concoctions.

The Invalid

Old ships are tired sailing into port—
Dim, white-winged galleons weighted down with wares
From lands away off there. Adventuring
In strange sea-ways enshadows them. Who cares
That they are gale-torn by the sweep of years
When they have seen gold dawns in Sicily—
In far Japan young, cherry-blossomed dusks
Agleam on waves of lapis lazuli?
I have on me the weariness of ships
Long journeyed although I have never gone
Beyond these four walls where my fingertips
Might love old things of mine about the room.
Yet I am like home-coming ships wind-blown—
I dream the vagabondage they have known!

VIRGINIA J. FOLEY.

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CHESTERTON: THE FLYING SWORD

By CLEMENT WOOD

ONE of the marvels of literary energy in the world today is G. K. Chesterton. Turn where you will, he is before you. Not content with starring one of the finer popular magazines with a new series of the inimitable Father Brown stories, and with editing and largely writing his own scintillant weekly, he has produced within half a year his monumental The Everlasting Man, and now a brilliant study of the neglected William Cobbett.

The very danger in such an aggressive career is that the acclaim of his later works will cause some blur of the worth of his earlier ones. It will be worth while, as preparation for his next display of amazing brilliance, to remind ourselves of his firm achievements as poet, novelist, short-story writer, essayist, and flying sword of the Lord in behalf of all the causes for which he is such a forthright spokesman.

Chesterton is just entering upon his fifty-second year; yet for more than half of that time he has been before the public as a literary artist of high magnitude. At the age of seventeen, he left Saint Paul's School, with the idea of studying art. But writing was in his soul; and the strong soul has a habit of bringing its seeds to birth. Great in every field he has touched, in the end it may be that his less polemic works will endure longest—his work especially in poetry, the drama, and fiction. Yet he is one of those well integrated people whose soul is his cause; and we will find, in the most casual lyric flung glitteringly out, that the same polemic emotion is at work that has produced his most penetratingly argumentative essays.

Theodore Maynard is, I believe, the only critic on either side of the water, barring this writer, who has hailed Chesterton as the greatest poet in living England; but there is a growing tendency among the other pundits to note belatedly the poetic bulk of the great singer of Lepanto. The long coarse narratives of Masefield have a rude post-Chaucerian strength, and his sonnets have a tired loveliness; but Chesterton has done finer narratives, and flames with a more living beauty. Thomas Hardy is a weary soul philandering with housemaids; the younger English poets follow tepid gelatinous or harlequinning gods, and falter with a thin first edition. More than five lusters ago Chesterton shouted, in The Wild Knight:

> Beneath the gnarled old knowledge-tree
> Sat, like an owl, the evil sage:
> "The world's a bubble," solemnly
> He read, and turned a second page.
> "A bubble, then, old crow," I cried,
> "God keep you in your weary wit!
> A bubble—have you ever spied
> The colors I have seen on it?"

The exquisite perfection of his tribute to the donkey, with its fine burst of reverence, is better known than such a little gem as The Beatific Vision; but this latter poem is the source of Le Gallienne's Flos Aevorum, and of countless pages from lesser American and English writers. Chesterton's finest sustained poem, The Ballad of the White Horse, has not yet found imitators; and so flawless is its handling, that the fact is not inexplicable. It is his power of seeing the usual with new sight that marks him off from lesser singers. This poem alone puts Chesterton ahead of all the living English poets; and the next volume added to his stature. In addition to the two glorious opening dedications, the fine hymn, O God of Earth and Altar, the magnificent Christmas sonnet, the glittering light verse, one poem, Lepanto, taught a new music to English poetry.

> Dim drums throbbing, in the hills half heard,
> Where only on a nameless throne a crownless prince has stirred,
> Where, risen from a doubtful seat and half-attainted stall,
> The last knight of Europe takes weapons from the wall,
> The last and lingering troubadour to whom the bird has sung,
> That once went singing southward when all the world was young.
> In that enormous silence, tiny and unafraid,
> Comes up along a winding road the noise of the Crusade.
> Strong gongs groaning as the guns boom far,
> Don John of Austria is going to the war,
> Stiff flags straining in the night-blasts cold,
> In the gloom black-purple, in the glint old-gold,
> Torchlight crimson on the copper kettle-drums,
> Then the tuckets, then the trumpets, then the cannon, and he comes,
> Don John laughing in the brave beard curled,
> Spurning of his stirrups like the thrones of all the world,
> Holding his head up for a flag of all the free.
> Love-light of Spain—hurrah!
> Death-light of Africa!
> Don John of Austria
> Is riding to the sea.

It is literary history that Floyd Dell, in some mid-western town, a few years later read these stirring lines to the then unknown Vachel Lindsay; and we have The Congo, stemmed straight from Chesterton: "Fat black bucks in a wine-barrel room," and the rest of it; but how ultimately less than its prototype!

Poe wrote the first detective stories; and G. K. Chesterton beyond all argument wrote the greatest of them. The best of Gaboriau, Conan Doyle, Arthur B. Reeves, and the rest of the modern strivers, falls hopelessly behind the weakest of the Father Brown stories. Only Chesterton could have made, of a fool-

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ish-looking little Roman Catholic priest, a detective easily able to solve the most tortuous mysteries; and only Chesterton could have written three dozen such stories, each splendidly plotted, and each subtly an argument for his own religious faith. The prose style throughout is exquisite, as witness this opening of The Sign of the Broken Sword:

> The thousand arms of the forest were grey, and its million fingers silver. In a sky of dark green-blue-like slate the stars were bleak and brilliant like splintered ice. All that thickly wooded and sparsely tenanted countryside was stiff with a bitter and brittle frost. The black hollows between the trunks of the trees looked like bottomless, black caverns of that Scandinavian hell, a hell of incalculable cold. Even the square stone tower of the church looked northern to the point of heathenry, as if it were some barbaric tower among the sea rocks of Iceland. It was a queer night for anyone to explore a churchyard. But, on the other hand, perhaps it was worth exploring.

The Flying Inn, the story of England's last tavern, which roamed the stretch of the island to escape the reforming prohibitionists, is marked by much of the best light verse that Chesterton has written. He must be a lost soul who cannot chuckle over:

> The song of the fury of Fragolette is a florid song and a torrid song,
> The song of the sorrow of Tara is sung to a harp unstrung,
> The song of the cheerful Shropshire Kid I consider a perfectly horrid song,
> And the song of the happy Futurist is a song that can't be sung.
>
> But who will write us a riding song,
> Or a fighting song or a drinking song,
> Fit for the fathers of you and me,
> That knew how to think and thrive?
> But the song of Beauty and Art and Love
> Is simply an utterly stinking song,
> To double you up and drag you down,
> And damn your soul alive.

The Man Who Was Thursday is the wildest of the fantasies, based upon the notion that the central governing body of the world's anarchists, by now, may be completely composed of police secret agents; and a weird merry chase the various pseudo-anarchists have of it, pending their discoveries that their fellows are, not conspirators, but fellow limbs of the law. The delightful Manalive tells the story of a man who went around the world, to arrive home again: jocose and Gargantuan fooling, readable throughout. The Ball and the Cross is another moving chronicle of derring-do, picturing the woeful state of England if she took too seriously proselyting attempts of the Moslem and alliances with the Turk. Whatever field this man touches, he writes interestingly and permanently.

I have not retained much space to speak of the essays—after all, these are Chesterton in the field where he is best known, and need little additional exposition. When G. K. C. sets himself to biography, whether Browning, Dickens, or Cobbett holds the limelight, be sure that the product will be readable in the ultimate, and surprising throughout. The life of Browning is the most engrossing biography I have ever read—done with all the glitter of Macaulay, and with far more accuracy of understanding and phrasing. The balanced series of essays, of which Heretics and Orthodoxy are the most famous, show a keen mind at work upon its predecessors and contemporaries; and woe for the sham and the paste when Chesterton turns the sword of his mind upon the false masquerading as the true! His weapon in the essays is primarily the paradox; but its recoil is never against the agile wielder of the blade. From The Everlasting Man, which Professor Phelps hailed this year as "one of the important books of our times," typical touches of the flying sword are:

> Far away in some strange constellation in skies infinitely remote, there is a small star, which astronomers may some day discover. At least I could never observe in the faces or demeanors of most astronomers or men of science any evidence that they had discovered it; though as a matter of fact they were walking about on it all the time.

One of his loveliest touches is this:

> But evolution really is mistaken for explanation. It has the fatal quality of leaving on many minds the impression that they do understand it and everything else; just as many of them live under a sort of illusion that they have read the Origin of Species.

Touch, my lord; brilliance like this is unanswerable.

Chesterton would be the first to uphold anyone's right to differing beliefs; but no one can prevent an intense admiration of this brilliance. As poet, dramatist, fictionist, and essayist, he has already won for himself one of the high places in our age: and there is every reason to hope that the future will lift him, for years, constantly higher and higher in achievement.

Passing Hour

The world grows strange and swings in different time.
And dandelions that you pluck and blow
To see if heaven wants you; and the chime
Of the hall clock are dwindling and are slow.
But carillons are pealing in the sky,
Through the Wild Swan their echoes crash and leap,
It is less glorious to live than die—
The storm-king highway arches into sleep.

Dreary November turns to opal June,
Tomorrow's sun on other lands is rising,
Within his hand, round silver of the moon,
My angel smiles and brings, for my surprising—
No, not the moon but something longer known;
My miracle of death, my own, my own.

ISABEL FISKE CONANT.

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THE PRESENT FRENCH PERSPECTIVE

By FÉLIX KLEIN

IT IS a dubious compliment to praise a journal in its own columns. Nevertheless, I trust I may be permitted, as a Frenchman, to say of The Commonweal that I have rarely found in any review published out of France, such accurate views upon the religious situation in our country. Among many articles on this subject, I would especially mention one published as long ago as the issue of October 21, by Dr. James J. Walsh, but still timely, whose title alone, The Paradox of France, projects a positive ray of light upon the horizon.

In this article the author, accurately and vividly at the same time, expressed the general disappointment at seeing a France so strong and homogenous during the war, thanks to the Union Sacrée, returning, after the elections of May 11, 1924, to the old internecine quarrels, tolerating a government which made a point of suppressing relations with the Holy See, even though its good will is indispensable to our foreign and political policy; driving once more beyond our frontiers the religious who had returned from their first exile to fight and work beneath the national flag, and irritating the Catholics of Alsace-Lorraine—whose return to our territory is the finest and perhaps the only tangible fruit of the war—by an application of its laicising law.

To see such designs—such menaces—taking form less than five years after the Armistice was a phenomenon deserving indeed of the term paradox. Happily, a paradox, and this time one full of consolation, is to be observed upon the other side. Not a single one of these designs has yet been put into execution. Today, just as before the rise to power of the Radical Cartel, we have our ambassador at the Vatican. The Papal Nuncio has not left Paris. Religious instruction is still being given in the public schools of Alsace-Lorraine. The orders, male and female, who returned to France since the war, are still in their convents and monasteries. M. Briand, after M. Herriot's futile attempt to form a ministry, is returned to the helm of affairs with a new mandate, by a coalition of the more moderate elements in the Chamber.

Whence comes this powerlessness of the adversaries of the Church to put their plans into execution? Largely, no doubt, from the truth that Catholics are showing themselves far more united than of old, and that our religious have frankly declared they "will not depart." But also, in great part, owing to the fact that the radical and socialist majority of 1924, elected as it was upon a purely political and financial platform, in no way represents the real sentiment of the country as regards the religious issue. Most Frenchmen, even when they are unbelievers, are conscious, vaguely though it may be, of the profound solidarity which exists between the moral welfare of France and her prestige abroad. Politicians who are the slaves of the machine, or the Masonic body, may affect to ignore this solidarity. But the moment they seek to pass from threats to effective persecution, the public conscience (at any rate since the war) rears itself against their designs. Obliged as they are, to appeal in their difficulties to men of greater intelligence than themselves, the first care of these latter is to pull the state vehicle out of the rut into which it has been let sink, and place it upon the hard and straight road of national tradition.

This is the real situation. It has existed for some time and even if it be not fated to endure, it merits our close attention. Certain acts not yet faded from public memory—the bestowal of the cardinal's hat upon Monsignor Ceretti in the Élysée Palace, the official participation of our government in the Lavigerie ceremonies, the happy reversal of our policies in the protectorate of Syria—were duly noticed in the press. But very few readers realized their real importance and their profound significance. There had been too great a tendency to regard such things as picturesque accidents or chance incidents. It had not been sufficiently realized that they were phenomena which had their roots deep in the past, and that what we were watching was, not a display of cut flowers and branches to deck a fleeting triumph, but the natural burgeoning of a very old tree which has resisted many storms.

The ceremony at the Élysée, for instance, which seemed to take the public so greatly by surprise, was not an innovation. For centuries the Church, which regards the bestowal of the scarlet hat upon newly created cardinals as a papal act, has conceded the actual ceremony of its imposition to our monarchs, and this not only in the case of French cardinals, but also in the case of Papal Nuncios who have been promoted during their term of duty in France. All our national executives, kings, emperors, and presidents in turn, have maintained this privilege jealously, and it has only been pretermitted during the brief periods when diplomatic relations were suspended. The government of today is just as tenacious of its rights as any other. But, in this latest case, a special difficulty arose. M. Doumergue is a Protestant. To surmount the problem, a good deal of good will was used on both sides. It was agreed that the ceremony should take place at the Élysée, indeed, and in the presence of the president, but also with the assistance of Cardinal Dubois, Archbishop of Paris, expressly delegated for this function by the sovereign Pontiff.

The ceremony was invested with the utmost solemnity. Upon the arrival of the chief participants, who

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included the Archbishop of Paris, the Nuncio, the ablegate Monsignor Valeri, the noble-guard Rampolla di Monteleone, nephew of Leo XIII's secretary of state, all in full court-dress, honors were rendered by the troops in the courtyard of the Élysée, while the band played the Marseillaise. The prelates were received by the president of the republic in the great Salon des Ambassadeurs. By his side stood M. Briand and the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After the presentation of the "baretta" and following the official luncheon, decorations were distributed to the principal guests. Cardinal Ceretti received the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor. This is an honor rarely bestowed. Inside the ranks of the Church, it has hitherto fallen only to the late Cardinals Gibbons and Mercier.

Besides this brilliant ceremony at the Élysée, other evidences have been at hand within the past few months, which show that France, despite more than one regrettable incident, has no intention of renouncing her historic rôle as a Christian nation. At all the exercises, religious and patriotic, which were held in honor of the centenary of Cardinal Lavigerie, and which surpassed in magnificence anything that was anticipated when I announced their advent in the pages of The Commonweal, the French government had a share worthy of the country it represents. At Algiers, the civil governor, M. Violette, took occasion to recall the civilizing and religious mission of the great Apostle of Africa. At Tunis, which is a country with the status of a protectorate, the president-general, according to traditional usage, received full liturgical honors during the religious ceremony. Welcomed at the door of the cathedral by the archbishop, he was conducted to a seat before the altar, and offered incense by the assistants. At Bayonne, Lavigerie's native city, and at Nancy, which was his first diocese, the government was represented during the fêtes by its prefects and magistrates. At Paris, in the Church of the Madeleine, where a ceremony took place under the auspices of the Oeuvre d'Orient, of which Lavigerie was director before being consecrated a bishop, the government was also represented.

It is unfortunately only too true that in Syria, where there were so many urgent reasons to maintain this tradition, we were forced to deplore a contrary policy on the part of a High Commissioner either so ill-informed or so careless of the Oriental temperament that he contrived to earn the hostility of Christians and Mohammedans alike. But it was certainly not in accordance with the instructions of the French government that General Sarrail conducted himself thus. On the contrary, in spite of his personal predilections, he was ordered again and again to return to the old tradition and to receive in person the liturgical honors at all "consular" Masses, notably on the day of the national fête. There is no doubt whatever that his influence was deplorable. But there is also no doubt that the French government did not fail to realize it. The first act of M. de Jouvenel, a liberal-minded and enlightened senator who replaced him, was an official visit to the Maronite patriarch, and his attitude, from the day of his arrival in December, has been entirely in conformity with traditions which were maintained in Syria even during the period of the French Revolution and throughout the days of the Terror. In this connection, an incident that is very little known is worth mention. Not content with possessing, for some long time past, a church for Maronite Catholics of the Melchite rite resident in Paris, the government a few months ago favored the opening of a chapel for those of the Syrian rite as well, and was officially represented at its consecration, on November 22, 1925, by Monsignor Chaptal, Auxiliary Bishop of Paris.

One other manifestation of a changed spirit in the attitude of state to Church has occurred, which merits mention in any consideration of the "paradox" which Dr. Walsh noted eight months ago. It is generally known that the Law of Separation voted in 1905, had created, so far as the material possessions of the Church were concerned, a dubious and difficult situation. Obliged to reject the cultural associations proposed by this law, as out of conformity with Catholic principles, the Church in France found itself incapable of possessing any property whatsoever under terms conformable with the civil law.

Following the war, negotiations between the Holy See and the French government had so far succeeded that cultural associations, somewhat similar to American holding corporations, had been arranged in most dioceses, which conformed both to the civil and canon law. But no means existed by which the few possessions remaining to the Church after the Law of Separation, nor the bequests which the faithful contrived to give her by more or less circuitous means could be transmitted to her in perpetuity.

This transmission, only possible hitherto with endless legal complication and great attendant expense, has now been facilitated by the government. The new law on finances, voted by the Senate on April 4, provides that "property which, before or after the Law of Separation, had been affected by private parties, associations, societies, syndicates, coöperatives, and other groups, to the purposes of any form of worship, may, up to the end of the year 1926, be turned over to diocesan associations, free of any tax to the benefit of the state."

It is scarcely necessary to insist upon any conclusion to be drawn from these events, not yet superseded by tangible evidence of a change of heart or policy on the part of the government. They do not, it is true, prove that everything is going for the best in France. But they do, I believe, tend to show that the true state of things is not to be judged from the declarations, more or less vociferous, and more or less menacing, uttered by professional politicians, who are accustomed to claim for words the value of deeds.

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ARABELLA READS A BOOK

By MARIE GALLAGHER

ARABELLA LAMB was born practical. She never stretched her neck to see the tops of the great buildings along the streets of the City, but always looked straight ahead of her to see where she was going. She never crossed a street without first turning her head deliberately to the right and then to the left to see that no reckless vehicle would run over her.

Her hair was brown and curly, but she twisted it into three long braids and wound them carefully around her head. Her large brown eyes she cautiously protected from the dust and dirt of the streets with yellow spectacles, and her full red lips she set into a prim line to keep them from being ravished by any adventurous young man.

One day she entered the great white Public Library and choosing a volume of her favorite short stories, written by a leprechaun, seated herself on a bench at a table and started to read. A whimsical passage caught her lips unawares, and they parted in a merry smile. She looked up in alarm and found herself staring straight into the thoughtful brown eyes of a young man. And then a most extraordinary thing happened.

The young man came over to her and took off her spectacles and unwound her hair.

"But that is not proper in the Public Library," protested Arabella.

"We are not in the Public Library," replied the young man, and Arabella, glancing about, saw that they were at the beginning of a long white path.

"How did we arrive here?" she inquired.

"Does it matter?" asked the young man.

"It certainly does," she replied. "I always like to know what I am doing."

The young man was silent.

"Well?" asked Arabella sternly.

"I don't know how we arrived here," he confessed.

"Oh! So you don't know!"

"No. Do you?" he queried.

Arabella's round brown eyes flashed indignantly.

"Of course I don't. Do you think I would ask a useless question?"

For several minutes they walked in silence down the slender white path that was bordered by high stone walls and that was just wide enough for the two of them.

"Do you know where we are?" she asked at length.

"I don't think so," he replied timidly.

"Do you by any chance know your own name?"

"No. I don't!" he replied defiantly.

"Hmmm." Arabella pressed her lips tightly together and the young man shrank so that there was a tiny border on his side of the path.

She walked angrily on and every once in awhile she raised her hand to put her hair in order, but then lowered it again; and every once in awhile the young man put out his hand to prevent her from putting her hair in order, and then dropped it again.

When they reached the end of the slender white path they stopped, for before them was a great dark lake and in the distance were great dark trees.

"What are we going to do now?" asked Arabella without looking at him.

He shook his head.

She glanced up at him, and upon perceiving his confession of helplessness, tossed her head contemptuously.

"Of course, you wouldn't know!"

"I guess we had better go back," he suggested.

She looked at him in surprise.

"All right," she agreed.

Half-way back, Arabella stopped abruptly.

"But I don't want to go back!" she said.

The young man stared at her in amazement, and then, with a sudden sweeping motion of his arms, caught her to his breast.

"My own darling!" he cried joyfully. "That changes everything." And he grew so large that he filled the entire path and had to pick her up in his arms and carry her.

Down the path they went, singing and laughing, and when they came to the end of the path there was a slim silver boat swaying upon the waters of the lake and on its side in silver letters was the name—"Trosatar."

"That is my name," boasted the young man.

"I thought you didn't know your name," remarked Arabella.

"I know it now," he returned proudly.

He put her gently down on three velvet cushions in the bottom of the boat and sat beside her. Her three braids trailed over the water like silken cords as the boat glided slowly on. It passed like the reflection of the crescent moon under green arches of overhanging branches, and between marshes of wild narcissi. Arabella leaned her head over the edge of the boat and kissed the drifting water-lilies. And Trosatar leaned over her and kissed her hair.

Suddenly she heard an odd, familiar sound, and looking intently at the green bank they were passing, she observed a large green frog. His round, protruding eyes stared solemnly at her and another familiar object was recalled to her mind.

"Where are my spectacles?" she cried.

"You should not think of your spectacles at such a time," wept Trosatar. "Now you've changed everything."

And even as he spoke, they were again on the slender white path, and the silver boat was nowhere to be seen. But Arabella was twining her braids hurriedly around her head and looking to the right and left of her for her spectacles.

"Here they are," said the young man, drawing them from his pocket.

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"If it hadn't been for the frog I'd have forgotten about them completely," she murmured gratefully.

"I'll have all frogs banished!" cried the young man.

"From where?" asked Arabella.

"From . . . from . . . I forget where," said the young man sadly.

And looking up from her book, Arabella saw him opposite her at the other side of the table. Even while she looked at him, he rose and walked off as though nothing had happened.

"Good-bye," she called after him, but he did not turn back.

Everyone else in the room turned to look at her, and she lowered her head confusedly over her book.

"My heart is beating quickly," she thought in alarm, and pressed her hand over it to quiet it. But as she felt it dancing under her fingers, she raised her other hand and took off her spectacles.

"Nothing like this has ever happened to me before," thought Arabella, and she put her spectacles into her pocket and went out to seek the young man.

A COMMUNICATION

UNIATS AND THEIR RITES

Newport, R. I.

TO the Editor:—Since I disclaim any scientific authority in things having to do with Eastern Christianity, a sufficient answer to Dr. Torosiewicz's letter [The Commonweal, June 9] criticising my very dogmatic attack on Mr. Stephen Gaselee's Uniats and Their Rites calls for nothing less than an appropriate setting forth of authentic quotations from able scholars. I shall try to say a few pertinent words.

First, Dr. Torosiewicz lays down: "There is no such thing as a 'Roman' rite, and there never was such a rite. All official publications of the Holy See know only Latin rite as opposed to Oriental rites. No scientific publication, official or otherwise, knows a 'Roman' rite." It is true that the Roman codex of canon law mentions the "Latin Church" and the "Oriental Church." "Latin" and 'Oriental" are ambiguous terms because by Latin Church the Roman codex means the churches of the Roman, Milanese, and Mozarabic rites. By Oriental Church the Roman codex means the autonomous Eastern Catholic churches. If Dr. Torosiewicz will read the correspondence that appeared in The Commonweal of April 15, April 29, May 6, and June 3, 1925, he will grasp what I mean when I say that the Roman rite is canonically distinct from the Mozarabic rite and that the Roman, Mozarabic, and Milanese rites together make up what the Roman codex designates as the "Latin Church." The Mozarabs and Roman Catholics are members of the Latin Church, as the Chaldeans and Melchites are members of the Oriental Church. Nevertheless, the Mozarabs are as distinct, canonically, as the Chaldeans are different from the Melchites. This fact is not explicit in the Roman codex. I do not deny that "Latin Catholic" is used officially. I do deny that the term is scientifically right and accurate. The following extract seems to me to justify my opinion:

Reverend Adrian Fortescue: "What is the counterpart to the Uniat churches? It might seem simplest to conceive this as the Roman Church, meaning all Catholics who use the Roman rite. That is, at any rate, an intelligible and reasonable use of the term 'Roman Catholic.' A Roman Catholic is a Catholic who uses the Roman rite, just as an Armenian Catholic is one who uses the Armenian rite. It would then seem obvious to call all Catholics who do not use the Roman rite Uniats. As far as liturgy goes, there is nothing against such a classification. In this sense the faithful of Milan and the Mozarabic families in Spain are Uniats. Their rite is not Roman; except for later Romanizing their rite has no more in common with that of the Roman Mother Church than have those of Eastern Catholics. So, also, the old Gallican Catholics, the people before the time of Charles the Great, who used the Gallican rite, were Uniats. But in this case we need not trouble much about them, since, except for its relics, the Gallican rite disappeared long before Uniat was thought of as a special name.

"Yet this is not common use. A Catholic of Milan knows quite well that he is Ambrosian in rite, but he would never think of calling himself a Uniat. He would probably, though foolishly, resent being put in the same category as the Eastern people. Practically in this classification all Western Catholics, all who use Latin as their liturgical language, are put in one class, ["Latin Church,"] Eastern Catholics in the other. ["Oriental Church."]

"Language used in the liturgy is almost the worst possible basis of distinction; yet in this case it comes practically to that. . . . We should never talk about a Latin rite, a Greek rite, a Syriac rite. There are now three Latin rites, those of Rome, Milan, and the Mozarabic rite; there are at least three Greek rites, those of Alexandria, Antioch, and Constantinople. . . . So language is no test of a rite. The only real test of a rite is its order, forms, and arrangements; and the note of each is the place of its origin. If people would realize this there would be less confusion of ideas on the subject. We should speak of the Roman, Byzantine, Alexandrine, Antiochene rites. Then it is clear what we are talking about; and it remains a very small detail in what language any of these may be used."

Second, when Mr. Gaselee wrote: "There is only one monastic rule in the East, the Basilian," I took for granted he was speaking only of the Byzantine East. I was not ignorant of the Armenian Mechitarist Benedictines; they follow a modernized modification of the western rule of Saint Benedict of Nursia. Neither was I ignorant of the Chaldean Antonian Congregation of Saint Hormisdas, the Maronite Antonian Congregations of Saint Isaiah and Saint Eliseus. "The rule bearing his [the Egyptian Saint Anthony's] name was compiled from his letters and precepts. There are still in the Orient a number of monasteries claiming Saint Anthony's rule, but in reality their rules date no further back than Saint Basil." (Catholic Encyclopedia, volume 1, page 555.)

I think Dr. Torosiewicz does me an injustice when, from my statement ("One wonders at the ignorance of such a writer, who seems never to have heard of the monastic regulations of Saint Theodore Studite") he deduces the implication that I imagined there were only two monastic institutions in the East, namely, Basilians and Studites. I was not thinking especially of the Catholic East; neither did I mention institutions or orders. In Eastern Orthodoxy each independent monastery is a rule unto itself. I name the regulations of Saint Theodore Studite merely as one disproof of Mr. Gaselee's statement: "There is only one monastic rule in the East, the Basilian." The Maronite Antonian rule bears approximately the same relation to the codes of Saint Basil or Saint Theodore Studite as the Roman codex to the Beatitudes.

LAWRENCE MAYNARD GRAY.

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THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

Plays of a Season

BEFORE distance lends too great an enchantment, it is time to begin an appraisal of a vanishing season that has held a singular importance from many and varied angles. Several acting reputations have been firmly established. Several totally unexpected successes have emerged from an astonishingly varied list of plays. And public taste has given hostages to the future in its approval and rejection of many curious offerings. It has been a season of deep undercurrents, good and bad, to which no one with a real understanding of the place of the theatre in modern life could remain indifferent.

In current interest, the quality of acting in the last season holds first place—not because it has great permanent value, but because it bears more directly on things we may expect in the months immediately to come. In a later issue, space permitting, I shall take up certain plays as they loom in retrospect. But for the moment, let us consider the actor and what he has given us that brings new vitality to the stage. Mr. Sothern appeared in modern clothes in Brieux's Accused, but gave us nothing new. In fact his quality was more that of the Shakespearean actor taken unawares. Mr. Hampden clung to costume and likewise to mannerisms, with a most satisfying and heroic Hamlet lacking slightly in lustre, his usual superb Cyrano, and little else to enhance his reputation. Otis Skinner, on the other hand, achieved real greatness as Falstaff, and made one long for many more opportunities to see his inwardly complete and outwardly polished work.

Among the younger men, one recalls most easily Philip Merivale as a virile, romantic, and amusing Hotspur, balanced against pleasing but mediocre performances in Antonia and The Monkey Talks. Merivale has reached the stage where plays should be written for him. Alfred Lunt, under his repertory contract with the Theatre Guild, has demonstrated a splendid versatility with a growing power of sharp characterization and a fine balance between the tragic and the comic sense. Unfortunately, his diction has not improved. Dudley Digges remains our finest artist for character parts with an added touch of genius as a director. Glenn Hunter in Young Woodley showed an ever-increasing ability to make himself interesting and appealing, but he still depends more on his own personality than on the art of acting in the interpretive sense. John Barrymore still leaves us waiting for something to match against his Hamlet. The modest but strong performances of Dwight Frye would about complete the list of those who have shown the plastic qualities of genuine acting, although I share the feeling that both William Harrigan and Robert Keith in The Great God Brown have shown a power approaching fine art. They should be watched carefully.

The development in the art of several of our actresses has been more encouraging. At the top of the list comes Helen Hayes. For several years she has been the most conspicuous victim of type casting—always as the aggressive though slightly poignant American flapper. A brief excursion into Shaw's Cleopatra did not dispel the atmosphere. Then came the revival of Barrie's What Every Woman Knows, and what every drama lover now knows is that Helen Hayes can sink herself into a complete characterization with unfaltering art and an astonishing emotional power. June Walker completed the promise of Processional with an amazingly poetic rendering of the slavey in The Glass Slipper. One hopes that her venture into Gentlemen Prefer Blondes will be as brief as it is sure to be expert. Mary Ellis, of Rose-Marie reputation, suddenly emerged as a youthful tragedienne of power and spiritual beauty in The Dybbuk, and followed this with a charming though less distinctive performance in The Romantic Young Lady. Claiborne Foster has brought certain qualities of sincerity and insight, plus personal charm, to that rather misdirected comedy, The Patsy. She still needs the test of a fine part in a great play. Leona Hogarth in The Great God Brown showed a broad range. Helen Chandler, whose Hedvig in The Wild Duck made every critic blink his eyes, has unfortunately started down the long grade of monotony. Ruth Gordon is still the première comedienne "in type," but needs a chance at more varied rôles.

In a somewhat different category, we have those very marked personalities of Helen Gahagan, Katherine Cornell, Ethel Barrymore, Ann Harding, Blanche Yurka, and Lynn Fontanne. In this sextette we find the great maturity of art, the widest range unhampered by physical limitations, and, on the whole, the most complete expression of the theatre. Miss Barrymore has become once more the slender and entrancing vision of other days, and acts always with exquisite refinement and reserve power. Miss Cornell is an interesting and glamorous personality first, and an actress second. If she does not yield to the menace of popularity, all will be well. Miss Gahagan adds to splendid physical equipment an obvious devotion to the theatre and an intensity of careful work that give her, perhaps, the greatest possibilities of all. Miss Yurka is more nearly at the summit of her powers and should within a season or two hold just about the leading position on our stage, both in comedy and tragedy. Miss Fontanne is expanding her range amazingly under the stimulus of the Theatre Guild plan. Although she is best known as a comedienne, she amply demonstrated her tragic force in Goat Song. Of Ann Harding this can be said in all fairness; she has everything before her if she will simplify her work.

Ziegfeld's Revue of 1926

MR. ZIEGFELD has rung a gong—rung it in no uncertain fashion, as is his wont. For to ring a gong with timorous hand in the general clang of New York is worse than ringing no gong at all, and who should know this better than the man who first brought the Broadway review to something approaching stupendous glamour! At all events, the Palm Beach entertainment originally billed as The Palm Beach Girl and changed to Ziegfeld's Revue of 1926 is an attempt to clothe, amid large publicity, what other review shops have been busily de-clothing for the last three years. The result is a trifle ambiguous, even if the proclaimed intention is not. There are still a few young ladies in the show who should not be exposed to sudden currents of cool air, just as there are one or two before-the-curtain songs which ring the usual changes on vulgarity.

On the other hand, by all means let us give the glorifier of the American girl his due. He has demonstrated to the complete conviction of everyone who has seen the revue that a lucrative summer show can be put on without resorting to general nudity and the pervasive atmosphere of an orgy.

Of the individual numbers in the revue, not much need be said. They flow along pleasantly enough, but with the exception of those enlivened by the inimitable Ray Dooley, they lack something of essential glamour either in music, personality, or novelty of execution.

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BOOKS

Life and Letters of Thomas Jefferson, by Francis W. Hirst. New York: The Macmillan Company. $6.00.

THIS year's Glorious Fourth, being the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Declaration, was celebrated by patriotic festivals more whole-hearted and spectacular than usual. There were greater crowds than ever, more florid orations, louder huzzas, louder music from horns and fifes —more gladsome tolling of bells. All of which is as it should be.

Under such circumstances, however, is it overbold to wonder whether a new impetus may also be given to our national tendency to forget or obscure the real issues connected with the destiny of America, and to lose that critical sense which is indispensable if our present struggle over the Constitution and its amendments (to name only one of many issues) is to be sanely determined? A mind that retains faith in the nation, but values reason and fights its thraldom to deceptive passions—such a mind might profitably serve us as a guide through our present wilderness of political and economic confusion, and speak to us through all the milling and shouting, in a still small voice.

How salutary, then, will it be for us to contemplate the career of the American who composed the Declaration itself, who very nearly succeeded in abolishing slavery before 1800, who was governor of Virginia during the Revolution, minister to France, secretary of state under Washington, twice president, and founder of the University of Virginia—a fervid Republican who was never led astray by jingoistic emotions, maintaining throughout his life an enviable union of critical sense and enthusiasm—and who died on the Fourth of July.

Thus it is in the highest degree a rational as well as a stimulating exercise to read through Francis W. Hirst's excellent new Life and Letters of Thomas Jefferson, an ample and sober biography. It runs to 175,000 words, none of which is wasted, none of which is dull, and none given over to the sad current fashion for jazz, paradox, or pseudo-psychology in the handling of historical personages. The author is an English economist; he gained his biographical technique in the school of the late Lord Morley, and he here does credit to that formidable champion of rationalism.

Inasmuch as Jefferson was a man of ideas primarily, a man who certainly experienced purely intellectual raptures and honestly tried in all his acts to materialize his purely theoretical conclusions, Mr. Hirst very properly devotes the bulk of his text to a varied and lucid analysis of the Jeffersonian theory of the republican state. The author creates no glorious Apollo, no Ariel, no Don Quixote, no victim of amour or repression, but really tries to perceive his subject as it really was—it is unfortunately necessary to reassure any present reader of a genuine "Life" that he is not confronted with a work of fiction.

The book contains much quotation from Jefferson's documents and correspondence, some of it hitherto unavailable. All of it is good; at random one can select from it a galaxy of wisdom such as the following:

"Ignorance is preferable to error: and he is less remote from the truth who believes nothing than he who believes what is wrong."

"No nation is drunken where wine is cheap; and none sober where the dearness of wine substitutes ardent spirits as the common beverage."

"When this poison [the reading of popular novels] infects the mind, it destroys its tone, and revolts it against wholesome reading. Reason and fact, plain and unadorned, are rejected. Nothing can engage attention unless dressed in all the figments of fancy, and nothing so bedecked comes amiss. The result is a bloated imagination, sickly judgment, and disgust toward all the real businesses of life."

"His [Washington's] heart was not warm in its affections; but he exactly calculated every man's value, and gave him a solid esteem proportioned to it."

But while he is chiefly engaged with the mental drama of Jefferson's life, as revealed in such sententiae, Mr. Hirst finds space to include many of those superficial "human" touches which serve to give to the work the illusion of actual life, and to speed the reader along pleasantly on his journey. Thus we are told how the sensitive thirty-three-year-old author of the Declaration writhed silently in his seat while the delegates slashed and hacked at his precious manuscript, and how his neighbor, Ben Franklin, comforted him with the amusing story of John Thompson the hatter. We follow him in his narrow escape from Tarleton's British dragoons at Monticello, and we are told how his Negro servant Caesar was trapped under the porch for eighteen hours while the invaders occupied the premises. We attend a noble gathering of French politicians, brought to his Paris residence by Lafayette, on which occasion he was "a silent witness to a coolness and candor of argument, unusual in the conflicts of political opinion; to a logical reasoning, and chaste eloquence, disfigured by no gaudy tinsel of rhetoric or declamation, and truly worthy of being placed in parallel with the finest dialogues of antiquity, as handed to us by Xenophon, by Plato, and Cicero." We learn how pathetically he urged his daughters Maria and Martha to "note every appearance, animal and vegetable, which indicates the approach of spring," and how the daughters, silly vain things, remained deaf to the frogs and bluebirds, and blind to the weeping willows, lilacs, and gooseberries.

The practical (and to Mr. Hirst, the ultimate) significance of the whole narrative, which should indeed be familiar to us in its broad outlines at least, is aptly stated: "A generation emerging from the unparalleled slaughter, confusion, and ruin caused by the most calamitous war of modern times is impelled by an instinct of self-preservation to study every device by which another may be averted. . . . But in a few years, when the horrors of 1914-1918 have begun to fade, the danger will reappear, unless the peaceful mood is reinforced by study and reflection, and unless new barriers of law are erected strong enough not only to curb the natural pugnacity of mankind but to bring statesmanship and diplomacy into line with the moral and economic interests of civilization. . . . John Stuart Mill used to advise his disciples to study Condorcet's life of the 'divine Turgot.' But the inspiration drawn from Turgot's character is dimmed by the melancholy circumstances of his failure. In the case of Jefferson we see how a suppler statesman encompassed by difficulties, different indeed, but not less formidable, successfully maintained peace with honor during a world war; and for eight years, while European rulers loaded debt and taxes on the backs of their wretched subjects, went on relieving his countrymen of the burdens and obligations that had been incurred during their struggle for independence."

This utilitarian view of history, as of everything else, was typical of the brighter spirits of Jefferson's age, as it was of the British rationalists of the 1870's. The typical honest scepticism and the sound progressive liberalism that go with it are endowed with definite and tremendous values. Its shortcoming lies, of course, in its blindness to anything in the nature of

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a mystical revelation of eternal or divine verities. It plays safe with the earthiness of Aristotle and fights shy of the flights of Plato.

However, even as we forgive the eighteenth century the placid insufficiencies of its deism, so long as it gave us the precious chastisements of Gulliver's Travels, so we may regard as venial Mr. Hirst's sin of oversympathy with the materialism of the Jeffersonian political ethics. As a literary biography of the current year, his monograph offers a thrice-welcome illustration of Wordsworth's observation that "the human mind is capable of being excited without . . . gross and violent stimulants."

ERNEST BRENNECKE, JR.

Jefferson and Hamilton: The Struggle for Democracy in America, by Claude G. Bowers. New York: The Houghton Mifflin Company. $5.00.

"THE eighteenth century witnessed their Plutarchian battles; the twentieth century uncovers at the graves at Monticello and in Trinity Churchyard—but the spirits of Jefferson and Hamilton still stalk the ways of men—still fighting." With this appropriate fragment in the epic style Mr. Claude G. Bowers closes his account of the first great contest to determine the nature of American government. Is it worth our while as citizens to go over the ground as carefully as this book invites us to? For my part, I think so.

The business of practical politics is to effect a satisfactory distribution of energy—to organize, as far as possible, conflicting interests into coöperative interests. Jefferson and Hamilton, building upon the experience of the past, stood each for a certain crucial way of getting this business done. Which of them has triumphed? Which has been endorsed by the century and a half which has passed since the signing of the Declaration? Or have we arrived at a stable compromise? It seems to me these queries are relatively interesting. The urge toward democracy or away from it often contorts the civic mind very queerly. A people which has just triumphantly banned Karolyi once gave Kossuth roses for a carpet. And while the Rotary Clubs have developed to a splendor undreamed of by the ancient Cincinnati, the League for Industrial Democracy has recently celebrated a more or less vigorous birthday.

Mr. Bowers's work is history of the new variety, admirably done, and deals with the ten years following the ratification of the Constitution. In other words, the time period is the administrations of Washington and Adams. The dynamic personality of Hamilton, supported by the aristocracy of the old colonies, has organized a party which holds with Edmund Burke that property is the abiding motif of government. Property and what it can do, that is; for Hamilton himself is a poor man. On the other hand, however, the sage of Monticello, with all the windows of his mind open to the new age, stands for the distribution of power. His heart is with the farmer, the day laborer, the immigrant who shall build up the vast unsettled lands; and with patient tenacity he organizes a party based on the rights of man. The stage is set, you see. But Mr. Bowers offers no neatly generalized high lights, no swift and sententious deductions. Not two men are here present, but two surging crowds. The idea is to place all this before you quite as it was: there is no biography, but a series of rapid, vigorous, and, on the whole, colorful portraits; no bald sketch of important achievements, but the atmosphere of every-day in which these achievements were carried through; no one-two-three of political cause and effect, but the detailed story of the crystallization of public consciousness and will into two great parties. Background material is supplied amply by a man who knows political organizations and has a sharp eye for whatever is dramatic in their story.

The work is really very charming. Without sacrificing the decent sobriety of historical narrative, Mr. Bowers writes vigorously and humanly. One is conscious, of course, that the lights are dimmed for Hamilton and turned on full force for Jefferson. Heroes are a perennial necessity and may be forgiven. Occasionally the animus is betrayed, as in this phrase describing Federalist efforts to pass the Sedition Law: "These debates were conducted under conditions of disorder that would have disgraced a discussion of brigands wrangling over a division of spoils in a wayside cave." The analysis of Hamilton's religious convictions is unfair, and that of Jefferson's unconvincing. Mr. Bowers's habit of finding parallels for his characters is not always fortunate; and his comparison of John Adams with Doctor Samuel Johnson is even a gross misfit. One might also reasonably prefer to see a little less of Tom Paine in the allusions to the French Revolution; and merely for the sake of accuracy which recalls the Vendée and the Chouans, it would have been better to strike out pictures of "French peasants hurrying to defend their soil and revolution." But who would make mountains of such things? The book as a whole is that fine variety of scholarship which delves for its delight.

There were several stages in the great debate, each of which Mr. Bowers formulates with some novelty. The first was the financial problem, settled dictatorially but ably by Hamilton, although he provided opportunity for corrupt speculation by private business men and even government officials. The second was the decision for England and against the French Revolution; and this developed a feverish atmosphere of debate about political principle, which did much to strengthen the Democratic Clubs. The third was the attempt to put in force alien and sedition laws, which might have empowered the government to silence its foes. The fourth—most picturesque of all—was the struggle which centered round about John Adams. In each and every one of these epic contests, Hamilton proved victorious; but in the end he had lost control of his party, his party had lost control of the government, and Jefferson was in the saddle. The development had been perfectly logical. Perhaps only the Federalists could have organized the business of American rule, but reason, circumstance, and the character of the age were against their retaining the whip-hand. Democracy, triumphant, would extend the suffrage and promote institutional freedom; and from that day until this, whoever would be an American aristocrat has been at some pains to purchase a disguise.

I think one puts aside this crowded story of old days with a feeling of depression. It is not so much a matter of having supposed that the giants of early America would prove taller and better than they seem to have been. After all, one is normally prepared for human nature. The deeper point is recognition of how small and precarious have been the fruits of victory earned with so much violent combat. Those who made the government under which we live were young men, energetic, studious, holding sturdy and clearly outlined convictions. They had a feeling that their tents were pitched somewhere near Armageddon. How is it with us, who view their battles in retrospect? "It is easier to understand the Hamiltonian distrust of democracy," says Mr. Bowers in his preface, "than to comprehend the faith of Jefferson—a faith of tremendous significance in history. He won because he was

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a host within himself, capable of coping single-handed against the combined geniuses of the opposition in the field of practical politics." And though Jefferson had the friendship of Madison and the help of such brilliant men as Gallatin, the substance of the remark quoted is wholly true. It was a magnificent thing to dream of democracy. It was a more magnificent thing to realize it, at least in part. Americans of today merely happen to be interested, once again, in whether it was a wholly sane thing.

Our sympathies are likely to be with the leveller, against privilege and vested interests, against any mandate designed to compel even the lowliest citizen into a position of hopeless subservience. We do not like the trappings of nobility or the ceremonial of royal rule any more than did the earliest Tammanyites applauding the vitriolic editorials of Freneau.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

Blues: An Anthology by W. C. Handy, with an introduction by Abbe Niles; illustrations by Miguel Covarrubias. New York: Albert and Charles Boni. $3.50.

"OH, the blues ain't nothing but a good man feeling bad" was the first line of one of the earlier of the blue melodies that swept the country. Abbe Niles, in the introduction to Blues: An Anthology by W. C. Handy, refers to the "blue formula" as "a subdominant modulation with alternations of tonic major and minor"—all of which might satisfy the pedantically inclined students of American folk music who have gone slumming in Harlem cabarets, but would certainly disconcert the three dusky Smith girls, Mamie, Bessie, and Clara who are the best known exponents of the lively art of blues wailing.

Most musicians and critics of modern music (Maestro Whiteman excepted) agree with Gilbert Seldes, arch high-priest of the lively arts craft, that jazz is not a music itself but a manner of playing music. The blues have not only a musical formula peculiar to themselves but they require a special rendering which in most cases defies the technique of white musicians. Chords and harmonies that come naturally from the keyboard of an untrained Negro pianist in a southern dance hall are often lost in the rendition of a better technician at the piano of a suave New York orchestra.

As this music defies white rendition there are also few white composers who can successfully imitate the spirit and the form. Examples of the work of Kern, Berlin, and Gershwin, composers in the Broadway manner of artificially contrived blues, do not come up to the work of Handy and other Negro pioneers. Excerpts from the score of Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue and his Concerto in F, and John Alden Carpenter's Krazy-Kat Ballet are included in the anthology, as these examples of symphonic jazz have a "blues" basis.

W. C. Handy is a Memphis Negro whose compositions and orchestras are well known throughout the South. With old Negro folk tunes and spirituals as a basis, he has composed a number of blues that have had a varying degree of popular success. Memphis Blues, Joe Turner Blues, Beale Street Blues, Hesitating Blues, Aunt Hager's Children's Blues, and St. Louis Blues, are some of the best known of his works.

The book is published in an attractive form with eight full-page drawings by Miguel Covarrubias, a young Mexican, whose renderings of Negro dance-hall types in the highly modernistic manner are extremely interesting.

J. M. KENNY, JR.

BRIEFER MENTION

The Yarn of a Yankee Privateer, edited by Nathaniel Hawthorne, with an introduction by Clifford Smythe. New York: Funk and Wagnalls. $2.00.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE, it will be remembered, was for some time an editor; and the interesting account of how a manuscript which once passed through his hands and which formed part of certain serialized memoirs written by a still unknown American adventurer is Mr. Smythe's memorable contribution to the lore about the great author of The Scarlet Letter. All who are curious about the circumferences of the life of the greatest American stylist will derive great pleasure from the book. It should be added, however, that the Privateer's "Yarn" is a valuable historical document. The details of service under the American flag during the War of 1812 are set forth neatly and realistically; the description of the crew of the Frolic is almost Hogarthian; and the final section, which deals with life in the Dartmoor prison, where the writer spent a considerable time in captivity, will appeal especially to those who have a flare for the history of institutions. Mr. Smythe has been fortunate in his literary discovery and fortunate again in his publishers, who issue the volume in an attractive form, enhanced with numerous illustrations.

They Knew the Washingtons, translated by Catherine Radziwill. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $3.00.

THE letters that the Princess Radziwill has used in the correspondence published under the title of They Knew the Washingtons are purported to have been written by Gaston de Maussion, who with his wife accompanied General de La Fayette to America, fought and schemed for his living and got back to France to succumb to the fascinations of Napoleon I and desert his wife and children left behind in America. This family correspondence was carried off for safety during the Bolshevik terrors and deposited in a bank in Warsaw. There is practically nothing new in the contents of these letters as far as they have appeared in Princess Radziwill's book. The narrative is generally charming and the historic interest of the personages involved carries the reader through her pages with pleasure. There is modern quality in the style of these communications which, purporting to be translations, read like original work. Altogether, the collection of the Maussion letters presents the picture of America during the period of her struggle for independence in a manner that is at once charming and instructive.

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THE QUIET CORNER

I counsel thee, shut not thy heart nor thy library.—C. LAMB.

"These July heats seem to be driving our Mid-West educators to the seashore," exclaimed Doctor Angelicus, reaching the library early in the morning and seizing his private palmetto fan from the peg that had long upheld his winter overcoat. "I am expecting my old friend, Rector Peregrinus."

Tittivillus, who had been rubbing his eyes which had a roof-garden look from the night before, rushed to the door in time to take the Rector's valises, shaking them vainly in anxiety to hear a clink. In a moment the educator was seated by the open window, the entering breeze wafting a strong aroma of the rectorial Bull Durham throughout the library.

After a few words of greeting for Doctor Angelicus, he relaxed into a fine mood of reminiscences of his long railroad journey into the effete East, through "the swarming Americas" as he called it. He noted, he said, evidences of the remarkable revival of interest in the classics, and seemed delighted by the display of the cow-field signs announcing the film plays of Dante, Mare Nostrum, and Ben-Hur.

Doctor Angelicus then found an opportunity to ask him to lunch with him.

"Impossible, old chap," he said, mingling the boyish manner of his campus with the austerity of the faculty room, "I have an appointment with Erastus Bragg, president of the Universal Safety Deposit Company, one of our largest college benefactors, and now building the new Bragg gate to our stadium. He gives me ten minutes before he takes the train for Washington. As for dinner, the widow of Colossus P. Brannigan, the donor of Brannigan Hall, wishes to meet and consult me about the college requirements of Colossus, Jr., who demands a place on our football team, which it is difficult in advance for me to assure to the family. You see, Angelicus, the college head "lies uneasy" as in Shakespeare. Tomorrow it will be the same thing over again: the Mothers' Club of Montclair must have an after-lunch talk on How to Keep Our Sons Children, and in the evening the College Presidents' Union will give their annual dinner at the Anthropological Club, when I shall talk on the question, Are We Men or Gods?

"I should think you might radio them your answer, very inexpensively," sniffed Doctor Angelicus.

"No, my dear friend, not to the Anthropological group. They claim to have made the ancient gods into nothing more or less than prominent gentlemen, or let us say, chieftains of the past. As we now apparently feel the lack of divinities, they seem to think it wise to make modern men into persons of supernatural natures and origins. I could hardly radio that, do you think?"

Leaving his valises in the care of Tittivillus, asking him to handle them with care, Rector Peregrinus seized his large black sombrero and dashed to catch the Wall Street Express. When he had gone, Doctor Angelicus turned a grave eye upon Primus Criticus and said slowly:

"You see the dangers of college education in those who graduate and yet refuse to be graduated. Some thirty years ago Peregrinus could whoop the wildest "Hickey-Kickey Ki-I" that any leader on the college bleachers could prance to: he was a good athlete, and a good classical scholar: he is now become a pumping station for after-dinner tobacco pipes, professorial conclaves of brain-denuded old gentlemen, and nervously-dismantled women of wealth. He will build the dormitories, halls, stadiums, and gateways of great universities—as yet, he has that much in him: the casket, the sacrophagus, will

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be great and splendid. But under the golden face-mask of the Tut-ankh-Amens that rest within there will be nothing but ashes. The spirit of Apollo, of Plato, of Aristotle and Aquinas will not be caught lurking in such quarters. 'I asked for bread,' One remarked, and you see the lovely stones they give Him! Now, I like Peregrinus: his college motor runs smooth, his synthetics are well blended: his Havanas and pipe-fillings are of the best. I had rather dine with him than with most of the learned and saintly friends of my youth. One finds good digestion, rare old stories and reminiscences, and clever people all about him. In fact, I hope to sit next him at the heavenly banquet through all eternity. I hope old Bragg gives him the million he needs, as it is better to give than to fall into debt through the market or the alimony court. Peregrinus does good: the sun goes down, glorified behind the pinnacles of Swamp City University—satis superque! But the ghosts of the prophets and the sybils? 'Ubi sunt?' in the words of the dear old Saint Bernard—'with the leaves and the snows' "—

Tittivillus here broke in proudly, " 'of yesteryears.' "

"My boy," said Angelicus, changing his tone, "you quote good poetry; I have the bright necktie I received last Christmas and I am going to award it to you as the Angelicus Prize for Flag Day."

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